796 1. To have had carnal relations with anyone, even an animal.
2. To have stolen the property of others.
3. To have killed.
792 4. To have falsely usurped spiritual perfections, and with the intention of personal profit.

783 Then follows a list of lesser sins. When the enumeration is completed, the reader addresses the monks, repeating three times the following question:

"Now, I ask the reverend ones: Are you free of these sins? And for the second time: Are you pure? And for the third time I ask: Are you pure?" If everyone is silent, the reader says: "The reverend Ones are free of these sins, therefore they are silent, that is how I understand it."

In this way are catalogued in more than two hundred paragraphs, without much order, the precepts dealing with the daily life of the monks, their housing, their food and drink. No detail however irrelevant or insignificant is omitted.

In Laos as in Cambodia "during the entire rainy season, a taper of the Vassa must burn in each pagoda. This consists of a more or less richly carved, painted, wooden cylinder into which is poured virgin wax around a wick" (E. Porée-Maspéro). Before going into retreat, the bonzes are given garments, then the people form a procession and enter the pagodas where they deposit their taper.

[43] Ho Khao Padap Dinh--the Feast of the Dead of the Ninth Month

• 196 773 This feast is celebrated on the fifteenth day of the waning moon of the ninth month and is accompanied by offerings to the bonzes.

735 A Jataka (Sadhitissaraja) taken from the Ha Sip Xat tells us the benefits acquired by celebrating this feast.

"Two poor devout Buddhist woodcutters sold the produce of their labor and bought two large urns. Into them they put some rice, a few pieces of sugar cane, two bowls, four bananas, some meat and fish, and some delicacies. They offered all this to a bonze on the day of the feast of the dead and vowed to be born again in a better state. As a result of this act of charity they were born again into a royal family. The husband became king and his wife queen. The Buddha then said to those who were listening to this story: "When an act of charity is done for the feast of the dead, one attains three blisses: the terrestrial bliss of being king, the celestial bliss of becoming Indra and finally the supreme bliss of Nirvana."